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Dear Co-Chairs Cohen and Demicco, Vice-Chairs Gresko and Kushner, Ranking Members Harding and Miner, and members of the Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 234, An Act Establishing a Pilot Program for Curbside Food Waste Collection Used in Anaerobic Digesters. This bill would help facilitate the reuse of home-generated food waste and anaerobic food digesters in the state.

Twenty-five percent of the waste stream in Connecticut that goes to incinerators is food waste. This is 500,000 tons a year, by far the biggest piece of our waste stream. Taking this amount out of the overall waste stream in Connecticut will reduce the amount we need to incinerate and create a cleaner waste stream for Waste to Energy plants. It's also a good way to help Connecticut meet its 60% MSW by 2023 reduction goal. Curbside food waste collection for anaerobic digesters is a great way to help reduce the waste stream in Connecticut.

Anaerobic Digestion of food waste not only helps to reduce our overall waste load, but it is also useful as a renewable, non-fossil fuel energy source. The process by which food waste is digested creates a bio-fuel that can be used as a power source. The leftover material from this process can be used as organic composted fertilizer and soil amendments. Taking into consideration both these benefits, it is a true win-win for Connecticut.

According to the Quantum Dynamics presentation to the Energy Committee on January 31, 2019, if we digested all the food waste in Connecticut, we would create 11MW of power, 10MM BTU of heat per hour, and avoid 63,500 CO2 emissions per year.

Municipalities in twenty-nine states, including Washington, California, New York and Massachusetts have food waste curbside pickup programs. Connecticut can use these successful programs as examples of how to move forward with such a program here.

In summary, along with reducing our overall waste stream, anaerobic digesters help promote diversity of clean energy options in our state, create job opportunities and help reduce carbon emissions that contribute to climate change. Thank you for your support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Noah Cross

Legislative Committee Member

Sierra Club Connecticut